

The Oregonian.

PORTLAND, THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 1864.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S "REFORM" RECORD.

The organization known as the National Civil Service Reform League is composed of men who supported Mr. Cleveland for the presidency on civil service reform grounds, and who therefore feel obliged to admit that they did not study themselves; to find that the administration has made a good record on this subject. A committee of this organization has just published a report, in the form of a review of the civil service reform record of the administration. The report is largely devoted to statement of the "enormous disadvantages and difficulties" under which the administration has labored,—chief of which, it is intimated, were the eagerness of the democrats to get possession of all the offices at once, and the impossibility of finding in the president's party men for cabinet positions who were willing to carry out the reform. The president, therefore, is held to be the burden of his own shoulders, and it is felt that in the circumstances he has done remarkably well.

The cause of the reform league therefore falls, not upon the president, but upon his party. It represents the president as much better than his party; and it seems to be justified in doing this. When he came into office he did not make the "clean sweep" that was expected; republicans here and there throughout the country are still in office places, and democrats are continually grubbing about it.

But the president is really open to criticism on the fact that he has not enforced a consistent rule. In some states he has given up the civil service wholly to the spoils-seekers; and this the Civil Service Reform Association is forced to admit, though it attempts excuses for it. The association attacks Postmaster-General Vilas as a spoilsmen, and instances his work in India. It is true, it says, there are 1800 fourth class offices which are filled at the pleasure of the government. About 1200 of these have been chosen, and of the remaining the appointments are so small that the offices are not desirable. This, indeed, has been the general rule of the post office department, and it is saying too little for President Cleveland to assert that it "has been beyond his power to withstand the perfidious principles of party claims upon public employment." For it that is true he is not the sturdy and efficient reformer that the association declares him to be.

It may be doubted whether civil service reform under our system will ever go further than to protect men in positions entirely subordinate, from removal for partisan reasons, and to allow those who are appointed for fixed terms to serve out those terms. If these features were adopted as settled principles of our system, most of the abuses of which complaint is justly made would disappear.

THE FAMILY UNITY AT THE POLES.

Kansas is the first state to give municipal suffrage to women and the new law had its first trial at the election on Tuesday last. When the governor signed the new municipal suffrage bill he filed with it an explanation stating he did so as a test of the value of woman suffrage. The one argument he said that appealed to his judgment was that the law was an experiment and could be repealed by a majority vote of both houses of the legislature if it did not work well. At Stockton, in order to give the new law a fair trial, all the men stepped aside and a city ticket composed entirely of women was allowed to be cast without opposition. The women in Stockton had the entire charge of all municipal work, including the construction of new water works for which the city was recently voted. The returns thus far received indicate that the introduction of woman suffrage does not work any consequential change in results. Women generally voted as their husbands did. This result is what THE OREGONIAN has always predicted would ensue in event of woman suffrage. It probably would not work any harm except when purely sentimental legislation was urged for social evils, and then probably the superior, not to say superlative, emotional impressiveness of women, would make her "hearts at high flood" stand broad now and then." But under ordinary circumstances, what would be found as to the old saying is true, "a wife voting with their husbands or other men in whom they had equal confidence and forehanded intelligence and character they felt equal respect. In a broad way the family is the unit of common human interests, social sympathies and moral purpose. There would be exceptions occasionally, but they would no more stand for the rule of women at the ballot-box than an exceptional child with two heads or six fingers stands for the average human form. The principle of the family unit on which all sound, sweet civilizations rest would assert itself in woman suffrage as it does in everything else in life. Women would vote with their most intimate and trusted male friends, because that is a woman's nature, even more than that a man's, and because women are affectionate, more impressionable, more tractable, and less selfish than men. A man might be frequently, not when his heart and friendship were, but where his social instincts were, but the average woman would be more likely to vote where her heart was rather than where her material stockade stood; and in a broad sense the heart of woman, married or single, is with some man-brother, father, husband, lover or male friend of some sort. Then the very combination of women's human nature is visibly changed; it would seldom after practical political or social results in this world, if female suffrage was universal to-day.

The weakness of women as suffragists, when they were independently in error, would grow out of their inherent propensity to consider their interests, testing with intolerance and impatience. They would feel that we do well to give up our right to be heard, to the ends of that social influence of intelligence and virtue, despoiling the nobler and wiser who, despite the policies and wills which a selfish man proposes to unite the Garrison bros., should be impatient with the wounded blade of fanaticism, whilst with the insane courage of a狂, in his injury of life, therefore, women at the ballot box would vote with her man or men, and the entire family influence for good or evil would not be changed; and, under extraordinary emotional excitement when women occasionally voted against her man or men, she would probably vote with those who, always seeking to find the Holy Grail, never secure it, because they invariably chose some notoriously injurious road to reach their moral goal.

The conviction that the situation would not be materially changed, that neither the world in general nor the world in particular, could be any better off than it was, is the chief cause of the so many thousands of years of education, intelligence, good sense and good feeling feel no desire to vote, and distrust the practical value of woman suffrage to society. A good many women, who do not lack moral courage, intelligence, independence, who are not afraid of being laughed at, are not friendly to woman suffrage, not because they are indifferent to the welfare of their sex or society, but because they think woman suffrage would be superfluous, since in a large sense their interests are all efficiently protected to-day by men as they possibly can be if all women voted, and because they are very strong advocates of woman suffrage, confounding that when woman suffrage ceases to be superfluous, human error rather than good government by its patriotic mission for the application of local government, will be the chief legislation to social diseases that can be successfully treated only with moral courage and sturdy police regulation. While, therefore, it is common for the warm advocates of woman suffrage to attribute the small interest taken in it to the so-called ignorance, cowardice or moral inertness of the majority of the sex, the real explanation of the popularity of woman suffrage with a very large number of exceedingly competent and thoughtful women is because they do not see any conceivable political or social benefit in the gift of the ballot to women; and they do see that where it allows the present weight of the family unit it is more likely to change it for error than for truth and the increased safety and welfare of the state.

THE BATTLE OF SHILOH.

A memorial statue of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston was unveiled at New Orleans yesterday, the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death at Shiloh. The battle of Shiloh, fought April 6, 1862, was the first great pitched battle of the civil war in the North and South, and met in open field fighting on opposite sides of numberless engaged and buried bodies on both sides. Sidney Johnston, in spite of the earnest remonstrances of Beauregard, had so safely dispersed his forces, instead of concentrating them, that he had permitted Grant to deal the Confederacy a vital blow by the capture of Fort Donelson. This reverse lost Johnston Southern Kentucky, a large portion of Middle Tennessee, including the important city of Nashville. While the remnant of his army he retreated to Corinth, Miss., and united with the forces of Beauregard, making his total command about 45,000 men. Grant was at Pittsburg Landing, the Tennessee, about twenty miles from Corinth, with 35,000 men, and Grant was on his way from Nashville to reinforce him. The position of his army on the west bank of the river, and the troops posted by him, C. S. Smithe, an able officer. It was well chosen, with a deep creek on either flank, and capable of strong defense, as it was only open to attack in front, which was partially covered by Owl creek. Buell started to join Grant the 15th of March, but, although the distance was but 120 miles, he moved so leisurely that it took his men twenty-three days to reach the Tennessee river, or a march of about five miles per day. Grant, in compliance with a telegram from Buell asking him to meet him at Savannah for conference, was at that point early on the morning of April 6, when the enemy attacked his front, which was under command of Sherman. The first part of Buell cannot be called prompt, though it attempted to do so. The enemy, however, was not properly led, and was easily beaten by him fairly, as he charged the flank of the rebels. The result of this was the first day when they struck Grant's army of 35,000 men (less 10,000 who had been sent to attack the enemy) and had the movement of the enemy which began on April 5 not been delayed by the culpable failure of the prison labor commissioners to work in the New England system of keeping convicts employed in some of their various employments. This situation is the practical consequence of the absence of any system of labor for the convicts in the state, and is the cause of the great difficulty in finding men to work for the state. When the contracts that have already several years to run have expired, the total number of idle convicts will be four times what it is at present. The prison labor commissioners speak strongly to the New York legislature in regard to the necessity of keeping convicts employed in some form of productive labor, but the legislative committee is simply trying to find some kind of industry for the prisoners that will not come into conflict with free labor. The result of the absurd anti-convict labor is a decrease in income and an increase of expense and double guards over the convicts, unless.

The notion that convict labor especially competes with free labor is absurd. The escape of Massachusetts earned \$163,000 last year toward the cost of their support, and we don't find the intelligent legislature of that manufacturing state passing any anti-convict labor laws. One year of idleness at Auburn penitentiary increased the number of convicts sent to the insane asylum from six in 1863 to twenty-six in 1864. The prison labor commissioners urge the adoption of the state account system of labor, and propose that the prisons should be moderately self-sustaining, with no attempt to return revenue to the state. They propose to limit the number of prisoners employed in any one branch of labor, with the exception of nothing on which 500 men can be employed; salary hardware, on which 500 men can be employed, and books and shoes, on which 1000 may be employed, and recommend that prison labor shall be employed in the manufacture of articles used in state penal and charitable institutions; that, so far as practicable, such trades and industries shall be selected as will least affect or injure outside industries in this state, and that no prison labor products shall be sold for less than the open market value."

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